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PATENT
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IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. An identifier indicating the status of each claim is provided.

Listing of Claims

1.   (Currently Amended) A service system for automatically distributing electronic information contents based on a utilization contract previously established between an information provider and a user, the service system comprising:

information distributing means for distributing electronic information contents to a user;

an information processing apparatus for receiving and processing the electronic information contents distributed from the information distributing means,

wherein the information processing apparatus calls and connects the information distributing means at a predetermined connection time, wherein the connection time is obtained by counting back from a display time, and receives and stores the electronic information contents from the information distributing means, and reads out and displays the electronic information contents at the display time;

wherein when two or more display times overlap, the information provider adjusts a connection time zone to prevent overlap of two or more connection times; and

wherein said information processing apparatus is automatically activated at a startup time that is further counted back from the connection time and an automatic browsing application is initiated at said startup time;

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wherein a web page in a category registered in advance is automatically displayed using said automatic browsing application at said display time; and

wherein said information provider includes a database for storing the electronic information contents selected by said user, a utilization charge payment method and customer information pertaining to said user.

2.   (Previously Presented) The electronic information content automatic distribution service system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said information distributing means comprises:

a plurality of electronic information content providing terminal devices for providing said electronic information contents to a user; and

a terminal connection management device for selecting a terminal device to provide the electronic information contents based on the utilization contract and for connecting to the information processing apparatus.

3.   (Previously Presented) The electronic information content automatic distribution service system as claimed in claim 1, wherein advertisement information is distributed from said information distributing means to a user's information processing apparatus with said electronic information contents.

4.   (Previously Presented) The electronic information content automatic distribution service system as claimed in claim 3, wherein said advertisement information contains a regionally limited advertisement related to a habitual area of a user.

5.   (Previously Presented) The electronic information content automatic distribution service system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said information provider distributes electronic information contents sequentially updated to said user.

6.   (Currently Amended) An apparatus for automatically receiving electronic information contents distributed from information distributing means based on a utilization contract previously established between an information provider and a user, the apparatus comprising:

a communication device for calling and connecting the information distributing means and for receiving the electronic information contents distributed from the information distributing means;

a storage device for storing the electronic information contents received from the communication device;

a display device for displaying the electronic information contents read out from the storage device;

a control device for controlling at least input and output of the communication device and display device, wherein the control device provides control so as to call and connect the information distributing means at a predetermined connection time, wherein the connection time is obtained by counting back from a display time, and to receive and store the electronic information contents from the information distributing means, and, read out and display the electronic information contents at the display time;

wherein when two or more display times overlap, the information provider adjusts a connection time zone to prevent overlap of two or more connection times; and

wherein said apparatus is automatically activated at a startup time that is further

counted back from the connection time and an automatic browsing application is initiated at said

startup time;

wherein a web page in a category registered in advance is automatically displayed

using said automatic browsing application at said display time; and

wherein said information provider includes a database for storing the electronic

information contents selected by said user, a utilization charge payment method and customer

information pertaining to said user.

7.   (Previously Presented) The information processing apparatus as claimed

in claim 6, further comprising:

operating means for setting a display time for reading out and displaying

electronic information contents on said display device.

8.   (Previously Presented) The information processing apparatus as claimed

in claim 6, wherein said control device sets a connection time for calling and connecting said

information distributing means by counting the connection time back from said display time.

9.   (Previously Presented) The information processing apparatus as claimed

in claim 6, further comprising:

a recording medium for operating said control device, said recording medium

having recorded therein a control program comprising:

a first procedure concerning a utilization contract made in advance between an information provider and a user;

a second procedure for setting a connection time that is a time for downloading electronic information contents from said information distributing means and for setting a display time that is a time for displaying electronic information contents by said information processing apparatus; and

a third procedure for calling said information distributing means to be connected to the user's information processing apparatus at said connection time, and receiving and storing electronic information contents from said information distributing means, and, reading out and displaying electronic information contents by said information processing apparatus at said display time.

10.   (Previously Presented) The information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 6, wherein advertisement information is displayed on said display device with electronic information contents.

11.   (Previously Presented) The information processing apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein said advertisement information contains a regionally limited advertisement related to a habitual area of a user.

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12.   (Currently Amended) A recording medium used to record electronic

information contents that are automatically distributed from an information provider's

information distributing means to a user's information processing apparatus, the recording

medium having a control program recorded therein, the program comprising:

a first procedure related to a utilization contract previously established between

the information provider and the user;

a second procedure for setting a connection time as a function of a time for

downloading electronic information contents from the information distributing means and a

display time that is a function of a time for displaying electronic information contents by the

information processing apparatus, wherein the connection time is obtained by counting back

from the display time;

a third procedure for calling the information distributing means at the connection

time to be connected to the user's information processing apparatus, receiving and storing the

electronic information contents from the information distributing means, and, reading out and

displaying the electronic information contents at the display time by the information processing

apparatus; and

a fourth procedure for automatically activating said information processing

apparatus at a startup time that is further counted back from the connection time and initiating an

automatic browsing application at said startup time;

a fifth procedure for automatically displaying a web page in a category registered

in advance using said automatic browsing application at said display time;

wherein when two or more display times overlap, the information provider adjusts

a connection time zone to prevent overlap of two or more connection times; and

wherein said information provider includes a database for storing the electronic information contents selected by said user, a utilization charge payment method and customer information pertaining to said user.

13.   (Previously Presented) The recording medium as claimed in claim 12, wherein said first procedure comprises the steps of:

registering a user in said information provider;

selecting a field of electronic information contents by said user; and

inputting a utilization charge payment method according to said electronic information content automatic distribution service.

14.   (Currently Amended) A method for automatically distributing arbitrary electronic information contents from an information provider's information distributing means to a user's information processing apparatus, said method comprising the steps of:

establishing a utilization contract in advance between the information provider and the user;

setting a connection time that is a function of a time for downloading electronic information contents from the information distributing means and a display time that is a function of a time for displaying electronic information contents by the information processing apparatus, wherein the connection time is obtained by counting back from the display time;

calling the information distributing means at the connection time so as to be connected to the user's information processing apparatus;

receiving the electronic information contents from the information distributing

means;

displaying the electronic information contents at the display time by the

information processing apparatus; and

automatically activating said information processing apparatus at a startup time

that is further counted back from the connection time and initiating an automatic browsing

application at said startup time;

automatically displaying a web page in a category registered in advance using

said automatic browsing application at said display time;

wherein when two or more display times overlap, the information provider adjusts

a connection time zone to prevent overlap of two or more connection times; and

wherein said information provider includes a database for storing the electronic

information contents selected by said user, a utilization charge payment method and customer

information pertaining to said user.

15.   (Previously Presented) The electronic information content automatic

distribution method as claimed in claim 14, comprising the steps of:

registering said user in an information provider during said utilization contract;

and

selecting a field of electronic information contents by said user so as to input a

utilization charge payment method relevant to said selected electronic information content

automatic distribution service.

16.   (Previously Presented) The electronic information content automatic distribution method as claimed in claim 14, wherein advertisement information is distributed from said information distributing means to the user's information processing apparatus together with said electronic information contents.

17.   (Previously Presented) The electronic information content automatic distribution method as claimed in claim 16, wherein said advertisement information contains a regionally limited advertisement related to a habitual area of a user.

18.   (Previously Presented) The electronic information content automatic distribution method as claimed in claim 14, wherein said information provider distributes electronic information contents sequentially updated to said user.